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Diana T Fritz 12/19/2006 04:44:00 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

Cable  
Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 04513

SIPDIS  
CXABU:  
ACTION: POL  
INFO: P/M ECON RSO AMB DCM MEPI

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:MJSISON  
DRAFTED: POL:JMAYBURY  
CLEARED: DCM:RALBRIGHT

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7170  
INFO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0032  
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 4595  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 004513

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/11/2014  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: DAS DIBBLE'S MEETING WITH MFA UNDER SECRETARY  
REF: A. (A) ABU DHABI 4504

[1](#)B. (B) STATE 254809

(U) Classified by Ambassador Michele J. Sison, reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On December 11, NEA DAS Philo Dibble, Ambassador, and Polchief met with MFA Under Secretary Abdullah Rashid to discuss encouraging Sunni participation in the Iraqi elections, Iraqi Prime Minister Allawi's recent visit to the UAE, and Iran's influence in Iraq. The UAEG wants to support Iraq's efforts to achieve stability, but remain concerned about Iranian interference in Iraq's internal affairs. The discussion also touched on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and included a renewed plea by the UAE for greater U.S. involvement in helping end the dispute. Discussion of U.S. talks with the UAE on a Free Trade Agreement and apparent Saudi efforts to punish Bahrain for entering into a FTA with the U.S. was covered in ref A, and Dibble's meeting with UAE Information Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed will be covered septel. End Summary.

Iraqi PM in the UAE; Sunni Participation in the Elections  
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[1](#)2. (C) Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi paid a quiet visit to the UAE December 8-10, during which he met with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed and with members of the Iraqi Sunni expatriate community. The visit was not reported in the local press, and security was tight (Allawi was sequestered on a private island belonging to Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed). According to MFA Under Secretary Abdullah Rashid, Allawi emphasized to the UAEG leadership that Iraqis need assistance and assurances with their upcoming election.

[1](#)3. (C) Abdullah Rashid said that it was in the UAE's interest to help those, like Allawi, who want to see Iraq recover. He

agreed with the USG that moderate Sunnis need to voice their support for the election. He said the UAE wants to help Iraq build an "internal consensus" because a split in Iraqi society would be dangerous for both Iraq and its neighbors. Abdullah Rashid said the UAEG is concerned that Iraqi media reports of factional and sectarian clashes in Iraq are stirring up public opinion negatively. "We don't want to see personal attacks, and we don't want to see things resolved by guns," he added. The UAE looks forward to the day when Iraq is stable, he said.

¶4. (C) DAS Dibble sought Abdullah Rashid's advice on how Iraq's Sunni community might be reassured. Abdullah Rashid said it was a difficult question for the U.S. as well as for the UAE. "We agree on the objective, but we don't know the mechanism to bring the Sunni leadership on board so that they don't feel that they are being excluded," he said. He said he received assurances from Iraqi National Security Advisor Al Rubaie that Sunnis were on the elections list.

#### Iranian meddling in Iraq

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¶5. (C) Abdullah Rashid said the Iranians have "ideological and strategic reasons" for interfering in Iraq's domestic affairs. On the one hand, the Iranians want to pursue their revolutionary agenda. On the other hand, they want to weaken Iraq so that it no longer represents a military threat to them. "They want to take revenge on Iraq for what happened during the Iran-Iraq war," Abdullah Rashid said. He said Iran is still trying to export its revolution, citing Iranian influence in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. "You see (Ayatollah) Khomeini's picture in Lebanon," he said. Dibble added that Iran's strategic objective was the greater concern, and Abdullah Rashid agreed.

¶6. (C) "Iran is a neighbor we cannot trust," Abdullah Rashid said. "It is an ambitious neighbor that wants to get bigger." That power, he added, needs to be checked. Iran's ambitions in the region date back to the time of the Shah, and it only feels more secure when it projects its power across the region, he said. Abdullah Rashid noted that Iranian interlocutors keep rotating, making it difficult to pin down their perspective on issues. This has prevented any progress in resolving the dispute over Iran's occupation of UAE islands in the Arabian Gulf. "We're going nowhere," Abdullah Rashid said.

#### Palestinian leadership

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¶7. (C) Abdullah Rashid reiterated the UAEG's strong support for Abu Mazen. "He is a friend of ours and we have a very good relationship with many people around him." The UAE sees an opportunity to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. "After 50 years, it's enough. We need to focus on other priorities that are important to us, and not always use the Palestinian issue as a pretext not to pay attention to other issues," he said. He urged the USG to put more effort into the peace process. The Arab-Israeli crisis needs to be approached in a strategic way, not in a routine manner, he added.

¶8. (U) DAS Dibble has cleared this message.

¶9. (U) Miminize considered.  
SISON